

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 120487
ORIGIN IO-13

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AORG, UN, EGEN, ECOSCO

SUBJECT: 17TH CPC: PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM

REF: (A) STATE 118157; (B) USUN 1450

1. AS APPROPRIATE, USDEL AT 17TH SESSION OF COMMITTEE FOR PROGRAM AND COORDINATION (CPC) SHOULD BE GUIDED BY THE FOLLOWING REGARDING THE PLANNED IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF THE UN PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM (SECTION 21 OF THE PROPOSED UN PROGRAM BUDGET FOR 1978-1979).

2. THE FACT THAT WE WANT TO AVOID INITIATING DETAILED BUDGET REVIEW WITHIN THE CPC (AS INDICATED IN REFTEL A) AND THE FACT THAT THE EXPECTED MODE OF OPERATION OF THE CPC AT THIS SESSION IS NOT YET CLEAR MAKE IT DIFFICULT TO
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PAGE 02 STATE 120487

PROVIDE DETAILED AND SPECIFIC GUIDANCE AT THIS STAGE.

3. WE FIND THE SECRETARIAT'S EVALUATION REPORT ON THE PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM (E/AC.51/89/ADD.2) TO BE OF LITTLE HELP. AS APPROPRIATE, USDEL MAY INDICATE OUR DISAPPOINTMENT WITH THE QUALITY OF THIS REPORT WHICH WE HAD EXPECTED WOULD SERVE AS THE FOUNDATION FOR THE IN-DEPTH

REVIEW. WE BELIEVE THIS INDICATES A FAILURE BY THE SECRETARIAT TO FULFILL ITS RESPONSIBILITY AS CALLED FOR IN PARA. 9 OF UNGA RES. 31/93 (MEDIUM-TERM PLAN).

4. REFTTEL B (PARA. 3B) INDICATES ONE OF THE ISSUES THAT MAY ARISE IN THE REVIEW OF THIS PROGRAM CONCERNS THE NEED FOR A CLEAR DEFINITION OF SUB-PROGRAMS. USDEL MAY INDICATE THAT SECTION 21 FAILS TO PROVIDE AN ADEQUATELY CLEAR DEFINITION OF THE SUB-PROGRAMS, OR EVEN OF THE PROGRAM ITSELF. WHILE THERE IS AT LEAST AN ATTEMPT TO PROVIDE CLEARLY STATED OBJECTIVES FOR THE SUB-PROGRAMS, THERE IS NO EFFORT TO PROVIDE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS ADEQUATE FOR FUTURE EVALUATIONS.

5. REFTTEL B (PARA 3B) INDICATES ANOTHER ISSUE REGARDING THIS PROGRAM MIGHT BE THE NEED FOR A CLOSER ALIGNMENT OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE WITH PROGRAM STRUCTURE. WE BELIEVE IT MAY BE USEFUL TO CONSIDER SUCH A CLOSER ALIGNMENT, BUT THAT MIGHT NOT BE REQUIRED IF SECTION 21 FOLLOWED A PROGRAM FORMAT RATHER THAN AN ORGANIZATIONAL UNIT FORMAT. THE FORMAT USED IN SECTION 21 GENERALLY OBSCURES THE ALLOCATION OF FINANCIAL AND PERSONNEL RESOURCES AMONG THE SUB-PROGRAMS, EXCEPT FOR TABLE 21.5 WHICH PROVIDES ONLY A CRUDE SUMMARY IN PERCENTAGE TERMS FOR THE BUDGET BIENNIUM BY ITSELF.

6. REFTTEL B (PARA. 3B) ALSO SUGGESTS THAT ATTENTION MAY BE FOCUSED ON THE COORDINATION OF INFORMATION UNITS IN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 120487

UN OVERALL. WE AGREE THAT SECTION 21 AND THE EVALUATION REPORT ARE DEFICIENT IN FAILING TO INDICATE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE INFORMATION UNITS COVERED AND THOSE IN THE REGIONAL COMMISSIONS AND OTHER UN BODIES. LACKING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE OVERALL RELATIONSHIP OF ALL UN INFORMATION UNITS MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO JUDGE THE ADEQUACY OF BUDGET ESTIMATES FOR THOSE INCLUDED IN SECTION 21.

7. A FINAL POSSIBLE ISSUE INDICATED IN REFTTEL B (PARA. 3B) CONCERNS THE LACK OF AN INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW/GOVERNING BODY FOR THE INFORMATION UNITS, THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION (OPI) IN PARTICULAR. THIS IS AN ISSUE THAT HAS ARISEN ALSO IN THE UN RESTRUCTURING COMMITTEE. USDEL SHOULD TAKE THE SAME POSITION TAKEN BY THE USG IN THE RESTRUCTURING COMMITTEE. THE PUBLIC INFORMATION PROGRAM ALREADY HAS A GOVERNING BODY IN THE GA (AND THE FIFTH COMMITTEE), THE SAME AS ANY OTHER UNIT OF THE SECRETARIAT. THERE IS NO REASON WHY IT REQUIRES A SEPARATE AND DIFFERENT GOVERNING BODY TO ISSUE POLICY GUIDANCE FOR IT. THIS

IS ESPECIALLY TRUE SINCE PUBLIC INFORMATION IS MORE OF A SERVICE FOR THE DIFFERENT UNITS OF THE SECRETARIAT AS A WHOLE THAN A DISTINCT PROGRAM IN THE USUAL SENSE OF THE WORD. FYI: IN ADDITION, WE ARE CONCERNED THAT A SEPARATE GOVERNING BODY WOULD FURTHER POLITICIZE OPI AND PROVIDE TO IT A MORE ACCESSIBLE POLITICAL BASE FOR MAKING GREATER BUDGETARY DEMANDS. END FYI

8. IN ACCORD WITH LONGSTANDING U.S. POLICY AND EXISTING UNGA RESOLUTIONS CITED IN THE EVALUATION REPORT, USDEL MAY REITERATE THE U.S. VIEW THAT OPI SHOULD SERVE AS AN EFFECTIVE SOURCE OF INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRACTICAL ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF THE UN RATHER THAN AS AN QUOTE ADVERTISING AGENCY UNQUOTE FOR THE UN OR AS A QUOTE PROPAGANDA MACHINE UNQUOTE FOR THE ADVOCACY OF THEORETICAL POLICIES (E.G., NIEO, CERDS) THAT ARE STRONGLY OPPOSED BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 STATE 120487

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Message Attributes

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Sent Date: 25-May-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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